



VirginiaGreenTravel.org

2013 Virginia Green Travel Star Awards Green Travel Star



Green Winery of the Year



North Gate
Vineyard

North Gate Vineyard

When we began the design phase of our winery and tasting room, we quickly became aware of the US Green Building Council's LEED program. It was a perfect fit for what we hoped to accomplish with our new building, and gave us the guidelines that we needed to help us to build to LEED Gold specifications. This also made us aware of other programs that were available on the state and local level to help guide us to making the most environmentally friendly winery that we possibly could.

The biggest piece of our project is the 96 panel photovoltaic array, which is rated at 22 kW. After mechanical modeling of our project, we anticipated that this array would produce enough power to make our facility net zero in power consumption over the course of the year for up to 5000 cases of wine produced annually, and it has proven to be able to do so after the first two years of operation. Although we do have a small connection fee to our power company, we anticipate not paying for power over the course of a normal year. The building was positioned so that the south facing roofline is completely covered in solar panels, and it is visible from the road, creating awareness of our project.

Upon entering the building, our customers (up to 500 per week) see our dedication to recycling, reuse and reduction by the surfaces in our tasting room. The bar top is made of recycled glass, including wine bottles. The facade of the bar is reclaimed barn wood. The flooring is bamboo - a highly renewable resource. Prominently displayed next to the entrance is a cork recycling box. We are the Loudoun County drop off location for ReCork, a Canadian company that recycles wine corks into the soles of sport sandals. These items provide the perfect opportunity for our staff to answer questions and engage customers in our green building and sustainable practices, while enjoying their wine tasting.

Besides our regular customers, we have hosted tours for local county business owners, other wineries, delegations from Germany, South Korea, and Angola, and the VA Secretary of Technology, highlighting our building and dedication to the environment. We have done numerous fundraisers for local charities, bringing more of the general public in to our building, where we can show them what we have done and answer questions that will hopefully help them to be more aware of their carbon footprint

We have recently submitted our final application for our LEED certification, and hope to achieve a Gold rating. We also received a Platinum Award from the Loudoun County Green Business Challenge, two years running. Once again, we are participating in the 23rd Annual Washington, DC Tour of Solar & Green Homes, as well as our local Spring and Fall Farm Tours, which will bring even more opportunities to share our ideas and dedication to the environment with visitors.

We continue to explore ways to share our passion and knowledge in regard to the green aspects of our building, as well as making the agricultural aspect of our business more sustainable. With our partners Solar4, we hosted an informational forum entitled "Driving our Local Renewables Market", targeting wineries, distilleries and breweries in the state. We are also researching the introduction of "baby doll" sheep to the vineyard in the off season to manage weed control, and have plans to install a rain water collection system to use for necessary chemical application in the vineyard.

We truly believe we have the lowest carbon footprint winery in the county, if not the state.



Visit North Gate Vineyard's Virginia Green profile at:

<http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Portals/0/DEQ/PollutionPrevention/VirginiaGreen/Winery/NorthGate.pdf>

Virginia Green is run through a partnership between:



www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/PollutionPrevention/VirginiaGreen.aspx
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